



DIVISION OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

Jim Doyle
Governor

Helene Nelson
Secretary

State of Wisconsin

Department of Health and Family Services

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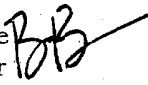
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Date: May 6, 2005

To: Wisconsin Foster Care Agencies

From: Burnie Bridge
Administrator 

Subject: Foster Family Month

This May, throughout Wisconsin we will celebrate and recognize foster families who are making an incredible difference in the lives of children and families. As the new Administrator in the Division of Children and Family Services, I am honored to begin work with foster families and professionals like you who work to provide safe and supportive homes for children.

This year we are pleased and excited to announce the creation of the Foster Care and Adoption Resource Center to help support and provide information to foster care coordinators, foster and adoptive families, and people interested in becoming foster and adoptive families. On May 21, 2005, the Foster Care and Adoption Resource Center will host an event to recognize the contributions of foster families and kick-off the opening of their office in Milwaukee. Later this summer, the Resource Center will also host events in Sheboygan and Eau Claire. For more information about these events and how the Resource Center can assist you, please contact them at www.wifostercareandadoption.org or 1-800-947-8074.

I'm happy to inform you that Governor Doyle has proposed an increase to the basic foster care reimbursement rate in his 2005-2007 budget proposal. We wholeheartedly support the Governor's proposal and feel strongly that it is necessary to improve financial support to help foster parents provide for the needs of children in their care.

On the Department of Health and Family Services' foster care web site, we have listed resources that you may find useful as you celebrate Foster Family Month in your community. Please visit our foster care web site at <http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/children/foster> for more information on Foster Family Month activities. If you are planning an event in your community, please contact Kate Johnson at johnssk@dhfs.state.wi.us or (608) 266-6874 with information so that we can recognize local celebrations across the state and include that information on our web site.

Again, this year Governor Doyle will be sending a personalized letter to all foster parents in Wisconsin in appreciation for all they do for children and families. We are working with the Department of Health and Family Services' Area Administration staff to distribute the letters. They will be in direct contact with you to get current mailing labels for all of your licensed foster homes. If you have any questions, please contact your Area Administration Office.

Thank you for all of the work you do to recruit, train, and support foster families across our state to provide safe homes for children. You are truly making a lasting impact on the lives of children and families in Wisconsin. I look forward to meeting you in the near future.